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Programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011

Follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade

Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/65/L.36

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/65/11 and Corr.1), in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/65/L.36 on the permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

2. As indicated in paragraph 1 of the statement of the Secretary-General, the General Assembly, under the terms of paragraph 6 of its resolution A/65/L.36, would decide to request the Secretary-General to organize a series of activities annually to commemorate the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, including a commemorative session of the Assembly at United Nations Headquarters and, as appropriate, activities through the network of United Nations information centres. In addition, under the terms of paragraph 7 of the resolution, the Assembly would request the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the countries concerned and with relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to continue to take appropriate steps to enhance world public awareness of the commemorative activities and the permanent memorial initiative, and to facilitate efforts to erect the permanent memorial at United Nations Headquarters.

3. As far as erecting a permanent memorial at United Nations Headquarters is concerned, the Secretary-General indicates his understanding that, on the basis of paragraphs 3 and 4 of the draft resolution, the request would be undertaken only

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when sufficient extrabudgetary funding has been received and that the associated long-term maintenance costs would also be borne by voluntary contributions (see A/C.5/65/11, para. 2).

4. The Advisory Committee notes that the activities referred to in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the draft resolution relate to subprogramme 3, Outreach and knowledge-sharing services, of programme 23, Public information, of the strategic framework for the period 2010-2011 (A/63/6/Rev.1) and to section 27, Public information, of the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011. Should the draft resolution be adopted, the Department of Public Information would organize a series of activities annually, described in paragraph 5 of the statement (A/C.5/65/11), to commemorate the International Day of Remembrance, including a commemorative session of the General Assembly at United Nations Headquarters and, as appropriate, other activities through the network of United Nations information centres, including an exhibit on a related theme, film screenings, a student videoconference with participation around the world, a cultural event or concert, a panel discussion with prominent speakers and experts in the field and educational outreach through posters, postcards, banners, T-shirts and promotional videos and DVDs.

5. The implementation of the various activities to be undertaken pursuant to draft resolution A/65/L.36 would require additional resources in the total amount of $251,500 for the biennium 2010-2011. The requirements would involve additional public information resources of $239,400 under section 27, Public information, of the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011, including general temporary assistance of one Professional and one General Service staff for five months ($72,900); contractual services relating to a cultural event or concert ($20,600), technical requirements for a student videoconference, a teachers' conference ($18,000) and film screenings ($1,500); travel expenses of panellists for a panel discussion by non-governmental organizations; education outreach resources ($15,000); and additional requirements of $12,100 under section 36, Staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011.

6. The Advisory Committee was informed that the costing took into account current staffing and non-staffing capacity in the Department of Public Information, as well as existing activities that already incorporate the theme, which are described in paragraph 9 of the statement (A/C.5/65/11). However, the expansion of the scope of the activities that would be carried out pursuant to the adoption of the draft resolution would require the additional resources. In addition, owing to the recurrent nature of the commemorative events, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution the resources for the biennium 2012-2013 and thereafter are estimated at $503,000 gross or $251,500 per annum.

7. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 10 of the statement of the Secretary-General that there are no provisions under the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 that could be made available in relation to the activities requested under draft resolution A/65/L.36. Furthermore, it is not possible, at the current stage, to identify activities within section 27, Public information, of the programme budget for 2010-2011 that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified to accommodate the additional requirements. The additional requirements would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

8. **Bearing in mind paragraphs 10 and 11 of the statement of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform**

the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/65/L.36, additional resource requirements amounting to $251,500 would be required under section 27, Public information ($239,400), and section 36, Staff assessment ($12,100), to be offset by the same amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011. Under the procedures established by the Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211, those provisions would represent a charge against the contingency fund.